



# POLICY STATEMENT

District of Columbia Pretrial Services Agency

Policy Statement 6003

Policy Area: Career Development

Date: 09/01/2005

Approved:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Susan W. Shaffer".

Susan W. Shaffer, Director

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## Commitment to Continuous Learning

### I. COVERAGE

This policy statement applies to all D.C. Pretrial Services Agency (PSA or Agency) employees, but does not cover volunteers, interns, consultants or contractors.

### II. BACKGROUND

In the past, PSA has not had a structured, consistent way of identifying learning and development needs of the workforce, and ensuring and documenting that the needs are met. This policy statement will allow for structured workplace learning and growth that enables mission accomplishment and successful implementation of PSA's Strategic Plan.

### III. POLICY

In order to effectively accomplish the Agency mission and implementation of its Strategic Plan as well as establishing PSA as a learning organization, the Agency is committed to enabling workplace learning and developing employees at all levels who engage in continuous learning in order to achieve the strategic plan objectives associated with their units as articulated in 5 C.F.R. § 410.202, while advancing their individual careers. At PSA, employees are responsible for managing their own careers with the support of the PSA Training and Career Development Center (T&CDC) and the employee's supervisor. To optimally provide the support employees need, PSA implements a competency-based training and career development program with this policy. Employees will have the opportunity to acquire, maintain and enhance Agency core and job specialty competencies by learning through the completion of developmental activities that lead to their continuing professional development. The PSA Career Management System (CMS) will put the necessary and accepted Federal government (as described in 5 C.F.R. § 410.204) and private sector career development tools listed below at the employees' disposal.

## **IV. PROCEDURES**

### **A. Employees**

1. Active career planning and developing strategies for career success are proven ways to advance in the government and private sector. Employees are required to actively engage in improving their performance and planning their career.
2. Employees at all levels are encouraged to utilize other appropriate Career Management System components and programs as needed, in order to improve performance and achieve personal career goals. The components and programs of the Career Management System are defined in Appendix A, Definitions, and listed below:
  - a. Employee Development Action Plan;
  - b. Core and Job Specialty Competencies;
  - c. Agency Mentoring Program;
  - d. Leadership Potential Program;
  - e. Supervisory Development Program;
  - f. Management Development Program;
  - g. Substance Abuse Treatment Training Program;
  - h. Tuition Reimbursement Program; and
  - i. New Employee Training Program.
3. The Employee Development Action Plan (EDAP) is a voluntary initiative on the part of the employee; however, an employee must have an EDAP on file with the Employee Development Specialist (EDS) in order to participate in any Career Management System (CMS) program listed above, with the exception of the New Employee Training Program.
4. Participation in CMS program components, as documented on the EDAP, can and should be used by employees in narratives and job interviews and/or narratives and interviews for competitive training programs to demonstrate employee initiative to develop professionally and advance in the Agency.
5. Employees must ensure they receive the minimum hours of professional development required for their positions in accordance with Policy Statement 6004, Yearly Mandatory Professional Development Hours.
6. Employees attend relevant formal training and engage in on-the-job learning, and other developmental activities with the support and guidance of their supervisors to improve their performance in their current positions. Those

employees who choose to have an EDAP must document their efforts by maintaining and updating the document (see Policy Statement 6006, Employee Development Action Plan).

## **B. Supervisors**

1. Supervisors are rated on their proven, documented ability to develop their subordinates. Supervisors must document their efforts to do so either on the Supervisor's Employee Record or by initialing off on completed items on the employee's EDAP (if he or she chooses to maintain this document). Supervisors must support their employees in their attempts to improve performance, achieve their career goals and meet their yearly professional development hours requirement.
2. For those employees who maintain an EDAP, supervisors must actively use this document as a performance improvement tool and to integrate on-the-job learning with formal training and other developmental activities. (See Policy Statement 6006, Employee Development Action Plan.) Supervisors are to ensure that employees receive the number of mandatory professional development hours prescribed for their positions.
3. In the case of formal training, supervisors must enable and support employees in formal training learning transfer, ensuring the principles learned are relevant to and will be used to enhance mission achievement and the successful implementation of PSA's Strategic Plan. Supervisors should also provide challenging on-the-job developmental activities for employees, as needed.
4. Supervisors must document actions taken to assist in developing their employees.
5. Supervisors are also responsible for developing themselves by engaging in meaningful on-the-job learning experiences, formal training and other developmental activities that develop their supervisory competencies in conjunction with established PSA policy and collaboration with their managers.

## **C. The PSA Training and Career Development Center (T&CDC)**

1. The T&CDC is responsible for making relevant training and career development opportunities available to PSA employees at all levels. These opportunities will include formal training as well as other structured learning activities.

2. The T&CDC will maintain employee training records in an automated learning management system and will maintain and monitor progress of EDAPs for employees who wish to utilize this tool. (See Policy Statement 6006, Employee Development Action Plan.)
3. The T&CDC will provide training on the continuous learning concept and the Career Management System and its programs and components.
4. The T&CDC will keep employees at all levels informed of all training and career development opportunities.
5. The T&CDC will assess developmental activities as to their applicability towards meeting the yearly professional development hours requirement.

**D. PSA Senior Leadership**

PSA Senior Leadership advocates and supports the concept of continuous learning by championing Career Management System programs, encouraging participation in programs and continually reaffirming PSA's commitment to continuous learning.

**V. AUTHORITIES, SUPERCEDURES, REFERENCES AND ATTACHMENTS**

- A. Authorities
  - 5 C.F.R. § 410.202
  - 5 C.F.R. § 410.204
- B. Supercedures
  - None
- C. References
  - Policy Statement 6001, Substance Abuse Treatment Training Program
  - Policy Statement 6002.1, Tuition Reimbursement
  - Policy Statement 6004, Yearly Mandatory Professional Development Hours
  - Policy Statement 6005, Agency Mentoring Program
  - Policy Statement 6006, Employee Development Action Plan
  - Policy Statement 6012, Supervisory Development Program (under development)
- D. Attachments
  - Appendix A: Definitions

**Appendix A, Definitions**  
**Policy Statement 6003, Commitment to Continuous Learning**

- A. **Career Management.** The process by which an employee proactively manages his or her own career, setting learning and career goals and strategically partnering with the Agency (by using tools and resources that the Agency makes available). The employee develops plans that foster his or her continuing professional development through performance improvement while simultaneously allowing for mission accomplishment and implementation of the Strategic Plan.
- B. **Career Management System (CMS).** A system that promotes workplace learning and proactive career planning and development on the part of PSA employees by making accepted Federal government and private sector career development tools available to employees. Career management programs and components include the Yearly Mandatory Professional Development Hours for PSA Employees, Employee Development Action Plan, the New Employee Training Program, the Mentoring Program, the Substance Abuse Treatment Training Program, the Tuition Reimbursement Program, the Leadership Potential Program, the Supervisory Development Program, and the Management Development Program. Each program is defined separately in this Appendix.
- C. **Competencies.** Measurable behaviors that demonstrate the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to achieve success for the organization and in one's job.
- D. **Core Competencies.** Those competencies that every employee (at all levels) must demonstrate in order for the employee to succeed personally in his/her position and for the organization to accomplish its mission. PSA core competencies are:
1. **Communications.** Behaviors that demonstrate appropriate and effective oral, written and nonverbal communications as they relate to the employee's position.
  2. **Customer and Stakeholder Service.** Behaviors that demonstrate quality service to all PSA customers and stakeholders, maximizing mission accomplishment.

3. **Leadership.** Behaviors at all organizational levels that demonstrate initiative, vision, and motivation to fulfill the Agency mission and implement the Strategic Plan.
  4. **PSA's Organization, Mission and Functions.** Behaviors that demonstrate an in-depth understanding of the D.C. Pretrial Services Agency and Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency (CSOSA), their respective missions and functions, and their roles in the D.C. and Federal criminal justice systems. Behaviors should also demonstrate thorough familiarity with PSA's Strategic Plan and how it relates to the individual's position.
- E. **Continuous Learning.** The activity of making learning a lifetime endeavor. The lifelong learner continually learns in order to improve performance, stay abreast of developments in the field, and reach career and personal goals. Learning becomes a part of everyday life.
- F. **Employee Development Action Plan (EDAP).** A tool that aligns the employee's core and job specialty competencies and/or performance plan elements with professional development activities that will help the employee improve performance and achieve short and long-term career goals. The document serves as a career planning tool for employees and a performance improvement tool for supervisors. The EDAP is a component of the Career Management System. (See Policy Statement 6006, Employee Development Action Plan, for additional information on formulating and maintaining an EDAP.)
- G. **Job Specialty Competencies.** Job specific competencies that the employee needs to function successfully in his or her specific job group.
- H. **Leadership Potential Program (LPP).** A program that gives employees currently occupying non-supervisory positions the opportunity to develop leadership qualities through a carefully designed mixture of developmental activities that meet the needs of each individual participant. The LPP is a component of the Career Management System. (The Leadership Potential Program policy is under development.)
- I. **Learning Organization.** "A place where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where new and collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together." (The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization, Peter Senge, New York, Doubleday, 1990.)

- J. **Management Development Program (MDP).** A program that allows for senior supervisors and managers to transition from supervisors/managers to leaders by giving them the opportunity to develop visionary and strategic skills. The MDP is a component of the Career Management System. (The Management Development Program policy is under development.)
- K. **Mentoring Program.** A formal, structured program that supports and enables the transfer of institutional knowledge and skills from senior leaders and subject matter experts to other employees throughout the Agency through successful mentoring relationships. The Mentoring Program is a component of the Career Management System. See Policy Statement 6005, Mentoring Program.
- L. **New Employee Training Program.** A program designed to give new employees the basic competencies needed to effectively function in their positions at a basic level. It is predicated on the employee continuing to learn, grow and improve in his or her position according to requirements of his or her job and the principles of continuous learning. The New Employee Training Program is a component of the Career Management System.
- M. **Professional Development.** The process of acquiring the competencies needed to achieve the purpose of an employee's job and improve employee performance.
- N. **Professional Development Activities.** Activities that promote learning and growth and meet the professional development needs of the employee, including formal training, shadowing, on-the-job projects, rotations, directed reading activities, attendance at professional conferences, etc. These activities are documented to ensure that each employee completes his or her annual mandatory professional development hours requirement. For more information on what constitutes a developmental activity, see Policy Statement 6006, Employee Development Action Plan, and Policy Statement 6004, Yearly Mandatory Professional Development Hours.
- O. **Substance Abuse Treatment Training Program (SATTP).** A training curriculum comprised of 12 training modules designed to enhance employees' knowledge, skills and abilities to enable them to work more effectively with the substance abusing population. It provides employees currently working with substance abusers training in their field and addresses their need for classroom hours for substance abuse counseling certification purposes, if applicable. As a by-product, the SATTP also provides employees interested in Certified Addiction Counseling (CAC) with the classroom hours required to sit for the certification exam, and

gives employees interested in transitioning from their job series to PSO (Substance Abuse) the opportunity to acquire the background knowledge required for this profession. It also enables any interested Agency employees to deepen their understanding of the substance abuse treatment profession. The SATTP is a component of the Career Management System. See Policy Statement 6001, Substance Abuse Treatment Training Program, for additional information.

- P. **Supervisory Development Program (SDP).** A program that provides new supervisors the opportunity to acquire critical supervisory competencies and allows established supervisors to assess their mastery of the same competencies so they may continue to develop and enhance them to ensure their units and offices continue to constructively contribute to implementation of the Agency mission and Strategic Plan. The SDP is a component of the Career Management System. (The SDP policy is under development.)
- Q. **Tuition Reimbursement Program (TRP).** A program that allows employees to take courses at accredited colleges and institutions to develop or enhance knowledge and skills needed for their current position, and be reimbursed for the cost of tuition for these courses. The TRP is a component of the Career Management System. See Policy Statement 6002.1, Tuition Reimbursement.